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A Collection of Poems

By

Lyde Todd Haskins

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A Collection of Poems

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MAY 11 1917

Coming of the Soldier Boys

(1899)

All shout welcome! both the young and old!
Kind Providence returns our boys, the bold.
Welcome the brave from others' deals,
Their hearts to duty done, our homage yields.
No more "hard-tack," nor suspicious beef,
No more Eagan turn to give a relief,
No more struggle nor encampment strife—
For them Kentucky and placid life.
The war with them is o'er and we say
Their home is here and they have come to stay.
To sweethearts and loved ones they have come
And naught was laid from shell nor bomb.

* * * *

A Memorial

Hear of aspiring, fair Miss Dorset,
Who a model would appear
Outside here embracing ();
At the broad-ribbed she would sneer.
"I'll look neat and look petite,"
So snugly she drew the gear.

Later, seldom noticed 'twas she'd smile,
To laugh her constant fear.
At dining she sat the briefest while
For a model she would appear.
Just to look neat and look petite
More snugly she drew the gear.

The roses yellowed on her face,
Blue lips showed symptoms drear;
French heels were dragged in slowest pace,
But a model she chose to appear
And would look neat, would look petite—
Closer yet she drew the gear.

The brilliance dulled far back in her eyes,
Her breathing shorter efforts, here,
The cause? her answer quick denies,
For a model she would appear
And would look neat and look petite—
Together she drew her gear.

Then pulseless the conquered anatomy lay.
Were sad her parting words to hear,
Thro vanity, vanity that will live alway.
Even then a model she would appear—
"My last wish to look neat and look petite"—
The furled idol with flowers was placed on her bier.

A Letter

Of the oft said amount
You have placed in my account,
This "dollar and two"
So long past due,
I've endeavored to find
From vision and mind
Some trace of its worth,
For gold is now dearth.
Futile the attempt.
From this task not exempt,
Of all I'll explain
Nor would longer refrain;
You in courtesy I accost,
Your patience do not exhaust,
In truth 'tis a need
We must nurture, feed.
Your loss, not my intent,
For a letter I have sent
That contained one request
Well meant, void of jest.
I repeat it, itemize
The bill you would realize—
For this poem sent to you,
Your indebtedness, "dollar and two."

* * * *

A Miniature Portrait

(1903)

A true delight for leisure sight
This paragon of beauteous grace.
Were Paris's voice now heard in choice
'Twould be the fair Virginia's face.

None but could tell this former belle,
Petite and proud yet thoughtful, too,
Virginia fair with jetty hair
And eyes bewitching blue.

Forsooth, it seems, the poet deems,
Obeying nymphs with eyes intent
Knelt by a repose and 'fore they arose
Left sea shells there the gods had sent.

Seems they did heed her ev'ry need
Near to perfection of her type
Of womanhood; Decimo good
Decreed for e'er the fortunes ripe.

The friends essay to haste the day
Of her return for duties light,
That bring the smiles and cause the whiles
Of inspiration, the poet's might.

An Immortal Influence

This universal power of earth
To nation's combats, gives peace a birth;
Has caused the lazy to work a while
And gives maiden ladies a peculiar smile;
It has profited the shrewd to them an agent dear.
Independent practitioners have leaned the accepting ear.
It has paused the aroused tongue of prepared malicious
course,
Assuaged proposing bachelors' most awkward hoarse,
Has inspired the conventional to deviate his key,
And lifted the social aspirant a definite degree.
It has silenced the talkative to thoughts most wise,
And restrained the queen's deep-wonted sighs.
It has created a youth in the shrunken old,
And persuaded the miser to will his gold.
Has induced the reticent to speak a long part,
And absorbed the indifferent with all mind and heart.
It has braced the despondent ill to a believing hope
And elevated the head of the school boy mope.
It has lulled the observing poor to more contented
hours.
Mother's new appreciations press closer lispng flowers.
It has smoothed the stern warrior's bold, menacing
frown,
And pleased the king to risk the crown.
To young girls it's a magic for thro the scantest bit
They are sustained buxom through the exchange of it,
The universal Compliment whether prose or rhyme,
In quantity and quality occasioned any time.

* * * *

A Brief Soliloquy of a Pill

(1901)

Inspid, sweet, or bitter, whether,
Round, oblong, or flat, or square,
Or white, or black, green, pink or brown—
And many names I'm called.
No laughter e'er my purpose thwarts,
For charity is my intent.
Ungrateful is the one
Who stares at me with great alarm
And lips pressed tightly in prompt despair.
With peace of diaphragm at stake,
Deferred in hands inclined to throw
What substitute could one prefer?
I'd give of ev'ry good that I possess—
If chronic, novice ones make haste—
If I could ask, ah, draught with me
Tomorrow's praise and the Universe
Would accept me as I am.

Two

They have caught and hold the usual smile,
Of weight, their duties, unknown to simple life;
None but the few are ever worth while,
To be "among those present" is ever their strife.

She weeps o'er the loss of Teddy's ear and nose
And the rude track on her pet dog's grave;
Baby's ill, nurse tends, to amusements she goes,
To endure it all she's a soldier brave.

Her picture's for the paper in attractive pose,
Like a cloud-maid afloat in the stormy sky,
With a book in her hand, cultured, she knows,
Or dreamily watching the stream gone dry.

She bids farewell to dimmed blooms on her hat,
Recalling each compliment heard.
Ah, she's a mind to remember all that,
She can quote each emphasized word.

Then she bends o'er his pale blue mandolin
Which attack he trembles like a waving tree,
While she plans new gowns, invitations to win
And trips to new points "others present" to see.

She possesses all things for her very own
Nor the least in vogue would she lack.
Her latest purchase, her lord's latest moan,
His mother's sympathy his pockets repack.

They have caught and hold the usual smile,
Their public language is for public life,
Nothing but show is ever worth while,
To keep "among those present" will be their strife.

* * * *

'Tis Spring

Come out, for ev'rywhere 'tis Spring.
The golden poppies thro fields aglow,
The zephyrs waft the violets sweet,
The almond blooms are white as snow
All-colored tulips greet.

The daffodils near, pansies bright,
The palms wave o'er the ivy green,
Exultant larks in joyous flight,
The carols from the thrushes seen,
There's sunshine ev'rywhere—'tis Spring.

A Fable

'Twas in a flowery, woodland vale
Where the divulger of this tale
Mid shadowy leaves neath vine-draped mossy boughs,
Heard a warbler's soulful song,
That held the passer long.
Inspired she sang to heaven her sacred vows.

A listening wise old owl
Wore a momentary scowl,
For the warbler would not sing to him of love.
He told to her his choice
In his all-commanding voice,
That she sing to him her sweetest from above.

In a nest not far away
His mate and owlies gray
Were lonesome in a tall and charred oak tree.
Their pensive, low "to-who?"
Was a strangeness to them new,
As near a sanctum bough the owl would be.

On a moonlit, starry night
The warbler planned her flight,
Stilled her song and drew her head beneath he.
While he heard their sad "to-who?"
The owl more thoughtful grew,
Embittered memories for e'er might cling.

A bird of Paradise
His heart then did entice.
As darkening clouds passed by he drooped his head.
He heard their sad "to-who?"
Toward their nest "to you! to you!"
And for his mate's old dearest song he plead.

* * * *

Kentucky's Weed

Sow them in the plant bed, those tiny brown seed,
In the kind of soil to produce the valued weed.
Then at the proper season set the plants out,
For the consuming objects view the leaves about.
Cut the stems before the frost to dry upon the scaffold.
Then leaf them and tie into hands to be raffled.
Suspend it in the barn till it's "in case" from the rain.
Strip and then bundle with the rustic's cheered refrain.
Load it in the wagon, then haul it to the place
Where it's to stop in line to be auctioneered apace.
It's near a twelve-month care for the tending of this weed,
That since Columbus landed it's a universal weed.
It's to dye, to sniff, exterminate and fertilize,
It's to reduce the debt and bring sweets with baby's prize.
From the pipe, rings of peace; from the plug, her lingu a lash
To be the Trust's fortune in lug, leaf and trash.

A Favorite

Facetious, winsome, debonair,
With voice so richly sweet,
And nymphly grace, hers, charming, rare,
In loveliness complete.

Unselfish and devoid of guile,
Nor Juno's fault is hers;
All youths enamored with her smile,
Dislike of none incurs.

Nor would she scorn the wooer least,
Nor deem it gay nor best
To feign regard that love increased,
Impassioned ones attest.

Her innate kindness dispels
Malicious-linguaged mirth.
No perfidy e'er hers which tells
Her known transcendent worth.

* * * *

Of Miss Helen Gould

(1902)

Come, muse of this profoundest art
Oft called, preside now o'er my pen
Nor mayst thou depart
'Till I have sung of Helen, then
Thy leave and respite take.
Of Helen who hath yet not learned?
Some heavenly goddess chose to bring
Divinest gifts to her whom none hath spurned.
Joy, mine to sing,
For heiress too, of wisdom, she,
In briefest praise delighted most,
Eschews that sordid pride to be
A kind redresser hating boast.
Hers, a beauty the sculptor craves,
A model for his dexterous hand.
Hers, a smile that the artist saves
Despite the gentle command.
'Tis a happy doom
O Flora's care that are for Helen grown,
The meadow flower and mountain bloom
Now worn where jewels previous shone.
Abundant cheer for all, her thought,
A sweet contentment finds, and frequent sought.
Continued homage to her not amiss.
Write her name with immortal hand,
Helen, noblest heiress of the land.

Lullaby

Rockaby, lullaby, clouds pass the moon,
Are you now resting, dear baby mine?
Rockaby, lullaby, twilight came soon;
I tend you, baby mine.
Jessamines white all their fragrance unfold,
Wee, precious baby of mine.
I'll rock you lightly and gently will hold
You in my arms, baby mine.

Rockaby, lullaby, sounds low, comes the night,
Drowsy blue eyes no longer can ope.
Rockaby, lullaby, e'en one kiss might
Wake you, sweet baby mine.
Oh, on the morrow a thousand I'll press
On your soft brow, baby mine.
Nor can you ever so gently caress
Me, helpless joy, baby mine.

Rockaby, lullaby, lonely, the hour.
Slumber, my darling, dear baby mine.
Rockaby, lullaby, mine only flower,
Slumber, fair treasure mine.
Mother still rocks you and looks o'er the lea,
Slumber dear Angel of mine.
Jesus kept father safe for you and me,
Dream on, then, dear baby mine.

(In "Jems of Poesy," Copyrighted 1904.)
(Music to "Lullaby" will soon be published by
the author.)

* * * *

Music

Pause where the wind thro the sacred pines
Breathes to the world its own lament;
Where the timid streams thro rippled lines
Among rocks purl low their discontent.
List to the dove in plaintive call,
The lonely coo response might bring.
The sound of oars in regular fall
Echoed thro channels, the indolent swing.
The thunder's break with commanding roar
Trembling the sky and fearful earth.
The sea's expiate moan to the tranquil shore.
Springtime's harmonies, accordant mirth.
Lo, the muffled chimes that toll a hymn
Thro reverent tones that lead the soul
In the autumn hour to heaven's brim
Near the holy shrine of mortality's goal.

The Strollers

Now, important, the aspect, with confident smiles,
For the colors and fits were the latest bought styles,
Of that maiden and youth of one spirit the day
'Twas decided to take a stroll out a far way.
Nor selected the by-path scenes for their view
But did stroll out Broadway then Fifth Avenue;
Nor did tire they of aught in the old Dutch town,
But continued the stroll and did feel their renown.
Unobserved, the attractions they frequently passed,
But indifferent, they, for their thoughts were then cast
On their colors and fits of the latest bought styles
Which appeared as they wished for the glorious whales.
Out the thoroughfare into the narrow wheel gate
Of that Park so extensive, where wonders await.
Energetic their walk with emphatic sound
For achievement, their project, tho silently bound.
The Museum, first, with the curios, art,
The display for their pleasure afforded no part.
Then apace, crossed the bridge for the mall neath the elms
By the seats for spectators, fatigue overwhelms.
The attainment was that a great effort be made
And accordingly strolled on a stern promenade.
The minutest observance for each they had won
Then departed for greater success had begun.
The ambitious delights ne'er before were as keen
And forgetful that hours had been flying unseen,
They uplifted their heads with more gratified souls,
To the Ramble caprice lured them on in their strolls,
And their colors and fits of the latest bought styles
On the lake might reflect they conceived in their smiles.
But the din of the late crowd soon occasioned their return,
Condescending, their glances, alarmed in concerned,
The contrasted appearance—not eagerly bold
In approaching the crowd, they reluctantly strolled.
The merry advance they had watched in a fear
And more vexed had become when the late crowd drew near;
Turned their gazes a-ground, their minds were depressed,
Disappointment possessed them as all they had guessed.
They were changed so in aspect, devoid of a smile;
Both their colors and fits out of date in each style
And were chosen the by-path scenes for their view
From the throngs of Broadway and Fifth Avenue—
Their thoughts of themselves, in their haste, were so drear,
Their homes were soon reached for Obscurity's cheer.

* * * * *

Superficial are vanities, they but annoy.
Ill preferred are the fancies to studied employ.
And exhaustless the labors that gain best result—
Meritorious products will ne'er be occult.

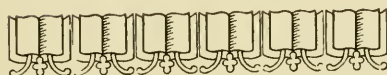
At the Rink

How merry the streets
Toward the rink.
How stinting time fleets
At the rink.
When the rolling, strenuous noise
Is heard with music's joys
By attendant girls and boys
At the rink.

There's a force of gravitation
At the rink;
But more's the determination
At the rink.
Ah, alas, the greatest mirth
For the novice is but dearth
Since he left his native hearth
For the rink.

The champion's faultless hour
At the rink,
Scatters praises in a shower
At the rink.
For each chosen straight or curve
His steady grace will serve
From the intruder's aimless swerve
At the rink.

There've been hearts with the hands
At the rink,
United in firm-pledged stands
At the rink.
No fidelities purloined
From the lives that were joined
Thro the friendships that were coined
At the rink.



The Future of English Verse

The mass of the reading English have so learned to appreciate thought expressed in verse that poetry has become an essential luxury.

In the history of English literature, since the early rhymists of the fourth century there was never so great a demand for poetry as the present time and this demand is supplied by the continual introduction of unknown poets thro papers, and magazines that are devoting pages to poetry.

What is so pleasing and simultaneously impressive as fancy and fact poetically treated? Not infrequently a play, discourse or book is held in remembrance by forceful rhymes.

A lawyer stated that he had won a case thro a relevant prosodical quotation.

The assertion that the rhymes have all been "used up" has been made in proof of the non-existence of English verse. Many poets have repeatedly employed the same rhymes, but of the multifarious thoughts that may call the same rhymes into use no estimate could be made. Thought is the substance of verse, rhyme one of the additional charms.

As to the merit of poems much mediocre verse finds a publisher, is quoted, perhaps, and forgotten; while the permanently appealing, worthy of perpetuation, maintains a superior and lasting usefulness.

In vocal music nothing so accurately accords with a decided tempo as a definite metrical arrangement of words. Prose of no recognized rhythm cannot be successfully substituted for poetry. And will not the nation ever have its national song and the popular ballads?

So long as immortal poets are read, and inspiration created; so long as the heart can be touched thro pathos and cheer; so long as technical variation is employed; so long as new words are coined and the foreign words domesticated,

All the rhymes
For future times

can never be "used up"—these insure the future of English verse.

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